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RECOLLECTIONS

OF
GEN. W. T. SHERMAN.Unjust Criticism of the First Attack on
Vicksburg.

ARKANSAS POST.

Frugality in the Field Regarding
the Bill of Fare.

SIEGE OF JACKSON.

The Old Hero Endured Him-
self to Everybody.

BY GEN. W. J. LANDRAM, LANCASTER, KY.



S everything connected with this distinguished citizen and soldier is necessarily of great interest to those who appreciate true nobility of character and heroic deeds, there is no better way in which to bring to light many occurrences that are worthy of remembrance than for each soldier who had the honor of serving under Gen. Sherman to place on record such recollections relating to him as may have come under his observation.

My acquaintance with Gen. Sherman was formed when he first visited Kentucky and assumed command of the forces in this State, with headquarters in Louisville. He was there at the time the battle of Wild Cat was fought; spoke in complimentary terms of the Union forces, and attributed considerable importance to the victory, which was about the first success of the Federal arms. His frank manner, genial and outspoken method of referring to the situation impressed me with the idea that he was destined to be one of the foremost leaders in the suppression of the rebellion.

While he seemed to be deeply impressed with the gravity of the situation, he was, nevertheless, communicative and easily ap-



GEN. W. J. LANDRAM.

proached by any who desired to impart information or to obtain advice upon anything relating to the war or the condition of the country.

These were characteristics that tended to make him universally popular with the volunteers, and while he expected and demanded strict obedience, he never allowed forms and ceremonies to usurp the place of common sense. He was exceedingly gratified that Kentucky remained in the Union, and claimed that it furnished a base of operations against the Confederate forces in Tennessee and Virginia, besides giving the State great credit for having furnished so many gallant soldiers to the Federal army.

I next met him at Memphis while he was organizing the campaign against Vicksburg. All of the troops, numbering about 20,000, were reviewed by him prior to embarking on transports that had been concentrated at that point. At the review of Gen. A. J. Smith's Division, my brigade was composed of six regiments of infantry and the "Chicago Mercantile Battery." In riding in front of the line, on reaching the 19th Ky., he dismounted and walked the entire length of the regiment, scrutinizing the command carefully, and speaking a kind word to the officers and men as he passed along the line.

From that time on he seemed to have a fondness for the Kentuckians, and they were exceedingly proud of the complimentary recognition given them on that occasion. He ascertained in some way that I had served in the Mexican war, and frequently referred to it, always expressing regret that he had not been permitted to take part in it.

At Chickasaw Bayou nothing could have been better than his preparations for battle, and while the attack failed, it was not due to any oversight upon his part or any want of complete knowledge of the situation. My brigade constituted the extreme right flank of the army, and extended from the main road leading into Vicksburg to the Mississippi River.

We had scarcely taken position before I received the following order:

Gen. Landram: Leaving your battery and a regiment in support, work your way up to the abatis as though covering the approach of a column directly on Vicksburg. Gen. Morgan and A. J. Smith will soon make a desperate attempt to recapture the last bayou and reach the hill. The Abatis is lying at Vicksburg from False River.

W. T. SHERMAN,

Major-General Commanding.

It was impossible to cross the abatis in any front, but as the troops in passing along

the road were in full view of the Confederate forces on the hills beyond the bayou, I marched and re-marched the men repeatedly down the road, so as to convey to the enemy the impression that a large portion of the army was advancing with a view to an assault on their left. It was evident, however, from the careless manner in which they viewed this demonstration that they anticipated nothing serious from the movement.

Gen. Sherman, unaccompanied by any of his staff, or even an orderly, visited me several times during the operations at Chickasaw Bayou, and gave his views freely in regard to the situation. My command was the last to withdraw, and although pursued by no force of any magnitude, we were followed by a portion of the Confederate forces, who were sent to observe our movements.

Some unjust criticism has been passed upon Gen. Sherman from time to time for the result of this affair; but those best acquainted with the facts know that his dispositions of his forces were admirable, and his plans well matured. There were reasonable grounds for the belief that Vicksburg could be taken, and with the army under his command he would have been justly amenable to censure if he had not made an earnest effort to effect its capture.

Proceeding at once to Arkansas Post, an investment of that place was effected, and its garrison, numbering from 6,000 to 8,000, captured. On the Saturday night preceding the battle I slept within 50 feet of Gen. Sherman, and he was one of the first officers I saw when I awoke in the morning. He was standing near a large tree, behind which he had slept during the night, eating a lunch, and upon examining the tree remarked that he had selected that tree for protection, but that it proved to be hollow, and seemed to be greatly amused at the fact that he had

passed the night virtually without any protection even from a minie-ball.

He informed me of the plan of battle, and told me that when I heard his troops on the right cheer as they advanced, to move my command forward and attack in front. During this interview, I suggested that I was sorry the battle had to be fought on Sunday. That my recollection of history was that in most if not all of the battles fought on Sunday, the attacking party suffered defeat. I referred to Waterloo, New Orleans, Bull Run, Mill Springs, and Shiloh as noted examples. It seemed to impress him, and he remarked that his attention had never been called to the subject before; but after a moment's reflection he turned to me and said, "Landram, this battle commenced yesterday, (Saturday), and we will go ahead with it to-day." With this he mounted his horse and galloped off to the right to order the assault.

When the white flag was raised in the afternoon, the Confederate General, Churchill, with his staff, rode into the fort and offered to surrender to me. I sent for Gen. Sherman, who soon appeared, and I informed him of the necessity for his presence, introduced him to Gen. Churchill, and he received the surrender. Churchill and his staff were morose, and were not at all polite to myself or to Gen. Sherman during the interview.

During all of the operations at Young's Point I met the General frequently, and often partook of his hospitality. Unlike McPherson, he seemed to give no thought to his bill of fare. McPherson lived like a prince, and entertained in a style that was not to be excelled, unless it was by Magruder, of the Confederate army. Sherman left everything to his staff, so far as I could see, and ate what was put before him without criticism or complaint, whether it was pork and beans or strawberries and cream. One thing was obvious,—that is, that all were welcome to anything he had at all times and upon all occasions.

While on the march from Bruinsburg, he overtook me and we rode together for several miles. He told me of his ascent of the Yazoo with a large number of transports, as though intending an attack upon Hayne's Bluff, which was designed to keep the forces of Pemberton in Vicksburg while Grant was working his way in his rear. He was greatly amused at the serious manner in which his adventures had been treated by the Confederates, and considered that he had succeeded admirably in accomplishing the object of his mission.

During the siege of Vicksburg he was a frequent visitor at the headquarters of Gen. A. J. Smith, of the old Regular Army, and who commanded a division in the Thirteenth Corps. Sometimes Gen. Grant would put in an appearance and remain an hour or so in pleasant conversation. During one of these visits Gen. Grant, in referring to his corps commanders, Sherman, McPherson, and Ord, spoke in complimentary terms of each

of those distinguished officers, but said that Sherman was capable of commanding any army, and that he would be proud to take a command under him. This was spoken with an earnestness that impressed me with the idea that Gen. Grant regarded Gen. Sherman as the greatest General in the army, and subsequent events showed that his confidence in his great Lieutenant remained unshaken to the end.

At the siege of Jackson he made a daily inspection of his lines, and nothing escaped his observation. While in command of the Fourth Division of the Thirteenth Corps I received a visit from him, and finding that a General in command of a division on my right had failed to bring his men to the front, and that a gap had been left in the lines, he told me to see that officer, give him his compliments, and ask him if he didn't think it would be better to march his division around by the way of Memphis. This was intended as a stinging rebuke to that General; but I only hunted him up and told him of the importance of a speedy compliance with orders, which he made haste to do, and the investment was complete.

He frequently expressed his contempt for officers who soldiered in the rear, seeking commands in cities and at posts while holding commissions as Brigadiers, and, as he said, "were lying around loose while Colonels were doing their duty as commanders of brigades and divisions." He believed that promotion should come alone from honorable and meritorious service in the field, and not as a reward for political influence or preference.

The Presidency was virtually tendered to him several times, but he thrust it from him as though he regarded it as an object unworthy of the seeking, and which he could not be induced to accept under any circumstances.

He was a man of great energy and force of character, and his influence upon the country was profound. His life was a constant struggle for the truth, and his death was a great loss to the nation.

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